

WATER USE/RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMM. MEETING MINUTES
January 19, 2021

Committee Members Present: Andy Boyar, Ginny Dudko, Al Henry, Fred Peckham, Evan Padua.
Committee Members Absent: Pat Jeffer
Staff: Laurie Ramie, Shannon Cilento, Ashley Hall-Bagdonas
NPS Partner: Don Hamilton
Guests: None. Jeff Dexter- Damascus Township Representative, Wayne Holmes- Boy Scouts of America, Heather Jacksy- Sullivan County Planning

The UDC's Water Use/Resource Management Committee held its monthly meeting via Zoom on Tuesday, January 19th, 2021. Boyar called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

Election of Committee Chair and Vice-Chair for 2021: A motion by Boyar, seconded by Henry, to elect Ginny Dudko as Committee Chairperson was carried with an abstention by Dudko. A motion by Dudko, seconded by Henry, to elect Andy Boyar as Vice-Chairperson was carried with an abstention by Boyar. Dudko wanted to thank the committee and also thank staff for recommending Zoom meetings. She feels the suggestion to stay muted when anyone is not talking is a good one.

A motion by Boyar, seconded by Padua approving the December 15th, 2020 amended meeting minutes carried.

Old Business

Ten Mile River Access Boat Ramp: Cost Estimates for Stone Block Option: Dudko said some cost estimates were provided in the meeting packet. Ramie said what we have included there is the most recent correspondence from Eric Baird of JHA Companies. Baird did follow-up on the questions we had from our 11/17 and 12/15 meetings. A new sketch plan is also provided for the stone block option and the cost estimate for the project which seem to be for the design and permitting. Ramie said she's not sure if these costs include the labor for the construction. With the contingency of 15% the total was a little under \$77,000 to construct this boat ramp. One aspect of the feasibility contract with JHA Companies is for them to provide UDC with the permitting requirements. Ramie said they were going to check with NYS DEC and the Army Corps of Engineers. They also realize that the NPS will have to approve of the project, as well. Hamilton said the question on labor costs would be something we need to clarify with Baird. Padua suggested writing Baird a follow-up letter.

Ramie said we have Heather Jacksy with us, saying Jacksy had experience with the Sullivan County-coordinated Local Waterfront Revitalization Program in working on Ten Mile River Access improvements and had some ideas. Ramie said she couldn't recall if that plan had included a boat ramp or launch of any sort. Jacksy said it did have a launch and it wasn't so dissimilar to what is shown here. She said the price isn't very different either. Theirs did include labor. Jacksy said she hasn't seen the actual site plan. Hall-Bagdonas forwarded her the site plan attachment that was reviewed at the 11/17 meeting.

Boyar asked if part of the due-diligence is touching base with the property owner and the NPS as the lease holder for feedback? Holmes said once there is final agreed-upon design and specifications from this group, he can take that to his Executive Board for their oversight and approval. Holmes said he wants to make sure everyone here agrees before he takes it up to that level. Jacksy said another piece they had at the ramp boat launch were stones that would help people with disabilities get in and out of boats. Jacksy said she's not sure if the stones mentioned are going to be tall enough for that but that could be a consideration. Hamilton said he wonders if there's an alternative to all the sheet piling? That's something that leaves a pretty big footprint on the site and it can be scoured around. He said with all of the concrete and rock it's a pretty big footprint. He thinks it emphasizes how it's not an ideal spot for a boat launch. The amount of engineering that has to go into it to create something there is a lot more than some of our other accesses that don't predate the designation of the NPS. Padua said he agrees, it takes a lot to build this ramp the correct way. It will likely get covered in silt every year and require maintenance. Henry feels we should move forward with the project. He said the Narrowsburg DEC Access is a mud hole. It requires a lot of maintenance

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annually. He said our mission was to put a ramp in that would be useable and he feels the engineers did a pretty good job. Jacksy thought NPS had looked at metal grid mats where the cost wouldn't be much different. It's just the instillation and removal each season. Padua feels we should keep this project moving forward because a lot of people use the access. Henry said regarding Hamilton's comment on the footprint, it's as big as the engineer's think it needs to be. Henry said he's in favor of moving forward with this. Boyar said one thing that comes to mind is whether it will silt up. He visited several different ramps in others states and they are kept clean from debris by fire companies coming in and doing a drill to clear them. He wondered whether that will create any type of problems when reviewed by NPS. Boyar thinks the project is a great idea. He visited the site 3 or 4 times in the past few months during high water events. There had been discussion on whether the ice and the water would move things out but in the most recent flood stage event, although it was a back eddy, it was relatively slow moving. Boyar said it was nothing that would rip or tear a structure out. He said silting may be the biggest problem at that access. He said this site is almost different than any other site on the river. It's wide there, moving rapidly centered toward the PA side. It's got this significant backflow in high water and it's a challenge. He said we may want the larger footprint there just to maintain it.

Dudko told Holmes that the UDC appreciates the Boy Scouts' generosity in sharing this site with the public and participating in these discussions. She asked his thoughts. Holmes said he feels an improvement to the site would definitely be a benefit to the Boy Scouts as well as for public usage. He feels the Executive Board would definitely have an interest. Holmes said their difficulty right now is not having enough funding to support being able to do this.

Hamilton said he has been talking with some of the Wild and Scenic Rivers folks and running it by them for input. They have concerns about the sheet piling being used, the length of the ramp, the amount of concrete being used in the footprint and how far it will extend out into the active channel.

Dudko requested Ramie send Baird at JHA Companies a letter requesting the total cost including labor and materials. Peckham said he feels we are just looking at one way when there could be several engineers with designs that could be better. Padua said the access designs of PA side Narrowsburg (Darbytown) and Cochection Fish & Boat Commission are both rockier sites. However, those ramps are the rebar and concrete style ramp which he assumes are cheaper than a bigger ramp. Padua said they seem to work great. He said they don't seem to get broken up too quickly. Both of those get a lot of current over them during floods as well and seem to withstand it. Padua said we obviously put our trust in these engineers but if we had the time and budget it could be beneficial to look into an alternate design. Boyar said he's not so concerned with the boat ramp being moved. If you visit the site the flow of the water even in high water is practically 100-yards away. He said it's a quiet area. Boyar has lots of photographs taken over the winter and the water is quite still there. He said he's not worried about the rocks being moved; he feels the engineer was correct in that aspect. As he said before he is concerned about the potential for silting. Boyar said we consulted an engineer and he supposes he had many options available and this is the option being recommended. Jacksy said no engineering was done on her project but the design is not dissimilar from JHA's design. She asked to be kept in the loop for the project. She said she will try to help UDC get funding for the project when it gets to that point. Hamilton asked Jacksy to forward him the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) plans for TMR. Jacksy said they did have some pushback from people on Crawford Road because they felt it was too much. She said their plans were the result of public input. Henry asked if Jacksy could send the specifications on the LWRP ramp to Ramie to send to the committee so they could see a second engineering option. Hamilton asked if Jacksy remembered whether a hydrologist was involved with the LWRP ramp plan? Jacksy said not specifically. There were planners and engineers who had history working in river zone accesses and waterfront. Ramie wanted to speak to Padua's point when he mentioned budgetary concerns at TMR. UDC had the funding available for this \$5,000 feasibility study because of gap funding in Fiscal Year 2020. There is no more funding available this year since Ramie just did the balance for our budget. She said if we were interested in seeking other proposals from engineers, we can't afford it now, not through UDC operating funds at least. Maybe we could find a grant for it. Ramie said hopefully this meets the objectives we had originally of presenting a ramp option. Jacksy thanked the committee for having her and signed off from the meeting.

12/16 PKC Conservation Strategies in the Upper Delaware River Watershed: Ramie said the meeting on 12/16 was a webinar by the Pocono Kittatinny Cluster of the Delaware River Watershed Initiative. It was the NY-side of the project which involved entities working in Delaware, Sullivan, and Orange Counties to discuss their conservation strategies. The Pocono Kittatinny Cluster (PKC) includes about 50 different collaborative

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organizations that are working to protect the river and streams. The co-coordinators of PKC are Susan Beecher and Steven Schwartz. Beecher used to be with Pike County Conservation and Schwartz is with Friends of the Upper Delaware River (FUDR), BioBlitz and other projects. The PKC is one of eight geographic areas that the Delaware River Water Initiative has set up. You can visit the website at: www.4states1source.org. Under Phase I from 2014-2017, PKC initiated: land protection projects for over 9,000 acres; assessed zoning ordinances for 31 municipalities; monitored 42 water quality sites; facilitated a successful \$2 million Open Space Bond; and secured \$450,000 in NY to help landowners implement conservation practices. Phase II from 2018-2020 has been extended to 2021 due to COVID delays. Its areas of focus will be on the Eastern Mongaup, Upper and Lower Neversink, and Lower Bashakill watersheds.

Some of the participants that provided updates on their conservation work were: Catskill Mountainkeeper; Cornell Cooperative Extension; Deerpark Rural Alliance; Delaware County Planning; Friends of the Upper Delaware River; NYS DEC (by report); Open Space Institute; City of Port Jervis; Sullivan County Planning; The Nature Conservancy; Town of Thompson; Upper Delaware Council and Trust for Public Land. Ramie and Cilento gave an overview of how UDC operates, the conservation issues we address, and offered as a couple specific examples the higher usage of the river accesses and the Ten Mile River Access boat ramp feasibility. Ramie and Cilento reported our new Five-Year Plan that was close to adoption at that point and on the update of the Project Review Workbook, with encouragement to attend our 1/25 training session. One question raised about the increased popularity of the river accesses was whether we've considered conducting a study to determine the carrying capacity for boats at each site without impacting water quality. The webinar had three breakout sessions before reporting back to the full group: One was for Municipalities. Cilento joined Land Protection. Ramie joined Neversink session, which was about the interest in developing a stream corridor management plan for the Neversink watershed with drainage in Towns of Fallsburg, Thompson, Mamakating, Forestburgh, Deerpark, and the villages and city those towns include.

1/13 Delaware River of the Year Webinar: "The Journey from River to Faucet: Dudko said she was able to participate in the webinar as well as Roger Saumure. Ramie and Hamilton attended as well. It was put on the American Rivers and Stroud Water Research Center. It was the third of these webinars that are associated with the 2020 River of the Year designation. Part 4 is scheduled for 4/1 titled "Dam, Dam Go Away: A Wild and Scenic Vision for America's Rivers". A link was sent out of the recorded webinar of the third session. Dudko said she appreciated them speaking about consumptive as opposed to non-consumptive use of water. In consumptive, you use the water and don't put it back such as NYC using the water. Non-consumptive they use it and return it such as electrical use and recreational use. Another point Dudko found interesting was water security. She said we have so much water here like on Rt. 55 where people would stop and collect natural spring water but other places in the world do not.

Upper Delaware BioBlitz Planning Update: Last month Cilento had shared that the steering committee confirmed the 2021 BioBlitz would be held at the Dodge/Snyder property in Damascus Township outside of Abrahamsville on the riverside. They just declared all the team leaders for all of the different classes of animals they will be counting and observing. The big difference between this year and former years is that it won't be a one weekend event. The team leader will be responsible for coordinating the team going out to do their counting and then everyone will be logging it into one comprehensive system. It will take place between June and August. She believes this could be really beneficial for some species number wise. When those days are determined they're going to let the committee members know so members can take photos, help with accounts and document. Cilento said it's moving forward, just in a slightly different way.

Delaware River Sojourn Planning Update: Cilento said they had a few Sojourn calls. Her main focus is the first four days of the Sojourn are in the Upper Delaware starting in Hancock. There will be a lot of focus on Upper Delaware flora and fauna conservation. UDC, NPS, FUDR, Delaware Highlands Conservancy are all in charge of doing programming that they are still fleshing out. There's going to be a pre-first day litter clean up at Hancock Fireman's Field. Cilento is helping to coordinate with a few other groups. She will provide more information on that once it's determined. Day 4 moves onto the middle Delaware. Because of COVID there's still a lot up in the air but tentatively it is scheduled for the last week in June or possibly August if a postponement is needed.

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2020 Pennsylvania Forest Action Plan Stakeholder Feedback Summary: Cilento said we had submitted our letter to Pennsylvania with comments on the plan. We provided in the meeting packet the one-page summary they sent out to everyone that provided feedback.

Eagle Creek Renewable Cultural Resources Study Report: Ramie said this was kind of a strange letter because it's telling us that the cultural resources study exists but we can't see it because it has sensitive documents and privileged information. Hamilton said they are still in a settlement agreement phase, working with the applicant and other stakeholders. They have another meeting on Thursday and hope to finalize the settlement agreement next month.

Distribution of Spotted Lanternfly Identification and Scraper Cards: Ramie wanted to mention that in a joint effort with the Upper Delaware Scenic Byway (UDSB) we obtained these Spotted Lanternfly identification scraper cards. If you find an egg mass you can use the laminated card and scrape off the egg mass to kill it. She mailed them out on 12/18 to all of our river towns including the non-participating townships as well as Bethel because of the spotting that they had at Lake Superior Park. Ramie did receive some feedback from communities that wanted additional copies. An interesting request came from the Deerpark Police Chief. He wanted 23 copies to give to every one of his officers because there was a sighting in Port Jervis. Spotted Lanternfly Identification Scraper Cards are still available for distribution per request.

Other: Henry recommends that we contact the Superintendent Salvatore before the next Water Use/Resource Management meeting to see if he would be willing to meet with us to discuss the current situation at Ten Mile River (TMR) and the Superintendent's Compendium. Henry said the goal is to see if they can modify or undo what he considers to be a mistake the past administration made relative to the trailering boats in that area. Motion by Henry seconded Boyar by carried. Ramie said we had been assured by NPS that they would put a stay on enforcing that prohibition and just approach it from an educational standpoint this summer, but it would be good to clarify that.

New Business

Upper Delaware Litter Sweep: Litter Leader Designation and Next Steps: Cilento said she and Hall-Bagdonas have made some good strides with litter sweep. A letter was sent out to all the municipalities asking for them to designate a Litter Leader by 1/15. We have about seven municipalities that have confirmed their Litter Leaders and about five that are potential or pending. Cilento made a social media post and Hall-Bagdonas received a handful of responses from that post. Cilento said in the next week or two we will be following up with the town/ships that we did not hear from to get a good idea where everyone is at by the beginning of February. Sullivan Renaissance just announced their annual grants and they do a lot with beautification. Cilento attended their seminar last week and was going to reach out to Carmela Hugel who is very anti-litter and see if we could fill in some gaps in the Sullivan County municipalities with their interns. We can possibly apply for a grant from Sullivan Renaissance as well. Ramie said we got a generous offer from Thiele Landscaping based in Eldred to use their heavy equipment as a donation which is really great. Boyar said he's grateful for Thiele Landscaping's offer. They have a dump truck that could be utilized to store and carry the litter picked up along the highway. Ramie would like to do a news release about the event, tied to promoting a day for a meeting. Henry suggests reaching out to school districts as far as Senior class projects, 4-4, and Envirothon groups. Cilento and Hall-Bagdonas are tasked with scheduling a Zoom meeting for Litter Leaders, partners and interested public. Padua said it will be good to have the Litter Leader meeting. He feels there will be a fair amount of overlap between the town/ships of people that can cover public accesses and roads. He said he appreciates the extra work Cilento and Hall-Bagdonas are taking on.

Cochecton-Damascus Bridge Rehabilitation Project Reevaluation: Dudko said a handout was provided in the meeting packet. Ramie said after we heard about this through the NPS letting us know about the reevaluation in which they found more deterioration than anticipated, we naturally asked the question how does this affect the rehabilitation project? Ramie said Mr. Kim Nichols advised her that the schedule for NY DOT is the contract letting is due for 2/18. They expect to award the contract the first week of April and to begin construction towards the end of May. It will take two construction seasons. They will do the one lane traffic. Padua said Skinner's Falls is a stalemate right now? Ramie said she's heard absolutely nothing about the Skinner's Falls Bridge lately.

Delaware River Flow & Storage Report: A copy of the 1/11 DRBC Hydrological Conditions Report was provided in members' packets. Total combined storage was at 91.4%.

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Other: Cilento reminded everyone that on Monday, we have the Zoom premiere of our Project Review Workbook training video. If you are interested in attending either the 3p.m. or the 5:30 p.m. session, we would love to have some board members attend. We have a decent amount signed up and she thanks the members that have already signed up.

Public Comment: None.

Adjournment: A motion by Boyar seconded by Padua, to adjourn the meeting at 8:13 p.m. was carried.

Minutes prepared by Ashley Hall-Bagdonas 2/2/2021